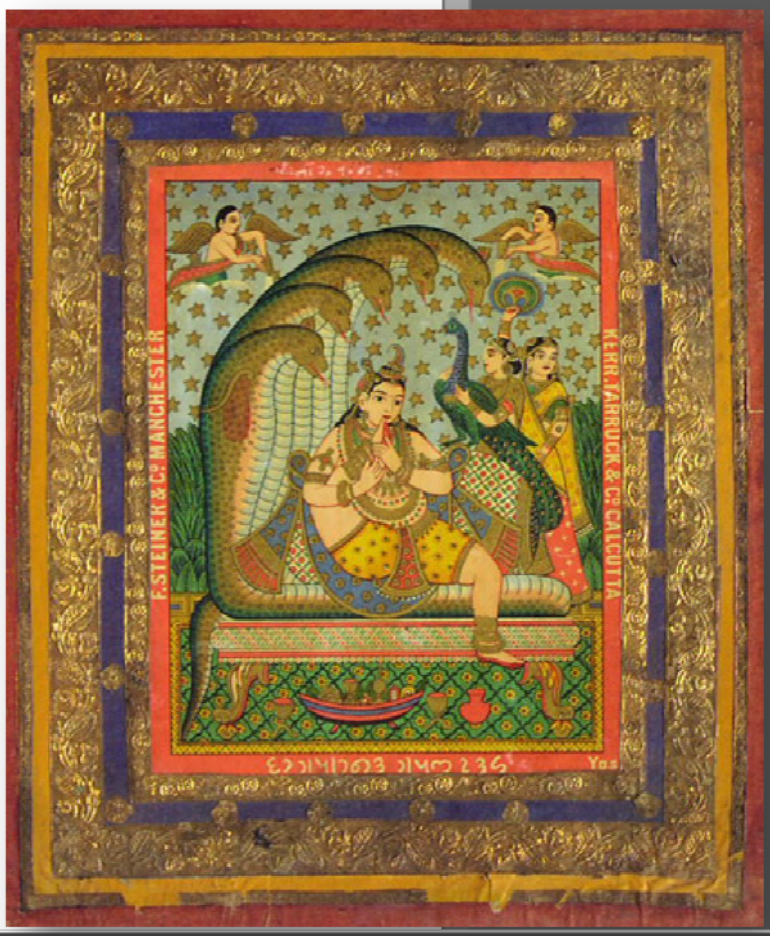
Parāśara Jyotiṣa Course

Year 1
Lessons



Pañcāṅga - Tithi#

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Pañcāṅga - Tithi

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1 Pakṣa-tithi jñāna

Śloka

शुक्लकृष्णावुमौ पक्षौ दैवे पैत्र्ये च कर्मणि
प्रतिपच्च द्वितीया च तृतीया तदनन्तरम्॥
śuklakṛṣṇāvubhau pakṣau daive paitrye ca karmaṇi
pratipacca dvitīyā ca tṛtīyā tadanantaram ||

Translation: Deva and pitṛs [karma] are performed in the śukla and kṛṣṇa pakṣa respectively. The tithi (Vedic days) are called pratipada (1), dvitīya (2), tritīya (3) in order.

चतुर्थी पञ्चमी षष्ठी सप्तमी चाष्टमी तथा।
नवमी दशमी चैवैकादशी द्वादशी ततः॥
caturthī pañcamī ṣaṣṭhī saptamī cāṣṭamī tathā |
navamī daśamī caivaikādaśī dvādaśī tataḥ ||

Translation: [The tithi in the order are] caturthī (4) pañcamī (5), ṣaṣṭhī (6), saptamī (7) and aṣṭamī (8) [followed by] navamī (9), daśamī (10), ekādaśī (11), dvādaśī (12).

त्रयोदशी ततो ज्ञेया ततः प्रोक्त्ता चतुर्दशी।
पूर्णिमा शुक्लपक्षे तु कृष्णपक्षे त्वमा स्मृता॥
trayodaśī tato jñeyā tataḥ prokttā caturdaśī |
pūrṇimā śuklapakṣe tu kṛṣṇapakṣe tvamā smṛtā ||

Translation: [Tithi order continues into] trayodaśī (13), caturdaśī (14) and then pūrṇimā (15) in śukla pakṣa while the fifteenth tithi in kṛṣṇa pakṣa is known as amā (15).

1.1 Tithi

The period between two consecutive conjunctions of the Sun and Moon (amāvāsya) or their opposition – pūrṇimā, takes about 29.5 days[1]. This is rounded off to 30 days keeping in a mind a monthly error of about ½ day which would have to be resolved later. A complete circle is 360° and dividing this by 30, we have an angle of 12°. Every tithi is an angular displacement between the Sun and Moon measuring 12°.

[1] 29.53 days (29 days, 12 hours, 44 minutes) on average

As the Sun moves and covers 30 days (approximately 30° transit in zodiac), the Moon has gone around the zodiac and caught up with the Sun. In reality the Moon has travelled an angular distance of 390° (360°+30°) between two consecutive Sun-Moon conjunctions. The daily motion of the Moon is about 13° (360°÷30=13°). Every day the Moon travels about 13° while the Sun moves ahead by 1° and the angular distance between them increases by 12° (13°-1°=12°). This is a tithi measuring 12° of angle between the luminaries and symbolizing the relationship between the two most important definitions of a being – the soul represented by the Sun and the mind represented by the Moon. Together they represent the spirit of the being.

These 30 tithi can be divided into two parts based on the waxing and waning Moon phases. The waxing phase is called śukla (bright) pakṣa while the waning phase is called kṛṣṇa pakṣa. Each pakṣa has 15 tithi where the angular displacement between the Sun and Moon is 180° (180=15×12°). The śloka teaches that śukla pakṣa is associated (or lorded) by the deva while the kṛṣṇa pakṣa is lorded by the pitṛs. The word deva is from div and refers to the Sun while the pitṛs refers to the Moon. These are the givers of life force or soma, the nectar of life, during the śukla and kṛṣṇa pakṣa respectively. During śukla pakṣa we find the Moon light increasing implying that the Sun is giving the light to the Moon or the life force is moving from the Sun to the Moon. For this reason, the giver of this life energy soma, is the Sun and the deities for this half are the Devas. During kṛṣṇa pakṣa we find the Moon light decreasing implying that the Moon is returning something back to the Sun. During this phase the Moon is the giver of the life energy soma and the deities are the pitṛs, who are the Maharṣi. In this manner the devas and the ṛṣi are not only creating everything but also sustain all creation by the life giving soma nectar.

If the Moon were to symbolize the individual being (as all beings are created by the pitṛs), then śukla pakṣa would indicate a period of receiving and kṛṣṇa pakṣa would indicate a period of giving. The daytime (Sun) would indicate the time when one works and receives the support of society while the night time (Moon) indicates the time to share with family and give to near and dear ones. The daytime or śukla pakṣa (Sun) will indicate a time to receive wealth and prosperity while the night time or kṛṣṇa pakṣa (Moon) indicates spending the same on food and family. Understanding this relationship between the Sun and Moon and the analogy of day and night extended into the śukla and kṛṣṇa pakṣa respectively, is the essence of Horā śāstra.

2 Moon Phase

The actual time between two syzygies or two phases is quite variable because the orbit of the Moon is elliptic and subject to various periodic perturbations, which change the velocity of the Moon. When the moon is closer to the earth, it moves faster; when it is farther, it moves slower. The orbit of the Earth around the Sun is also elliptic, so the speed of the Earth also varies, which also affects the phases of the Moon[2].

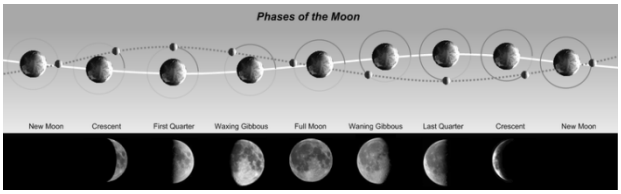


Figure 1: Phases of Moon

Phases of the Moon, as seen from the Northern Hemisphere. The Southern Hemisphere will see each phase rotated through 180°. When the Sun and Moon are conjunct in the zodiac, they are aligned on the same side of the Earth, and the Moon is 'New Moon' which is also a 'dark Moon' as it is not visible. This dark moon is called काली Kālī (literally dark or black). As the Moon waxes, the amount of illuminated lunar surface as seen from Earth begins to increase.

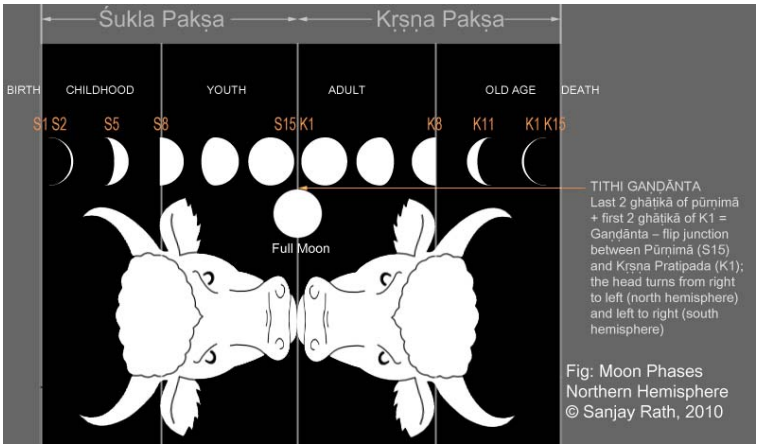


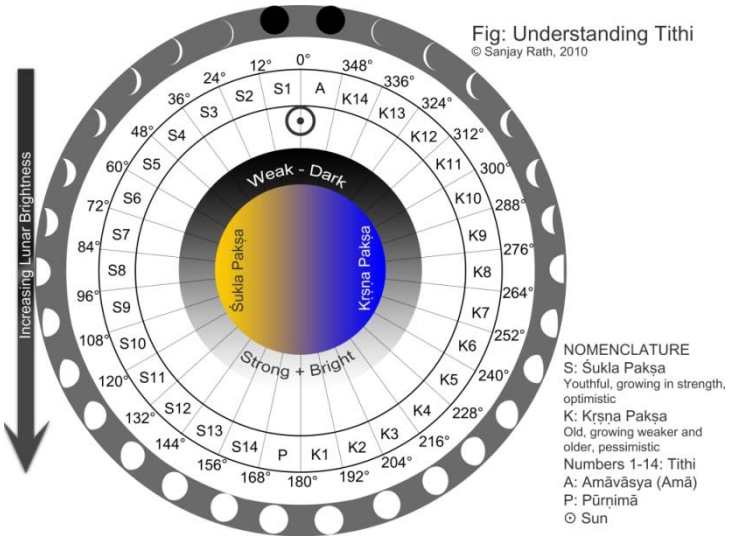
Figure 2: Phases - Holy Cow

The lunar phase progress from new moon to crescent moon when the 'horns of the holy cow' are visible. It reaches a stage of 50% illumination called first-quarter moon or aṣṭamī. At this point, the Moon is at a right angle (90°) ahead of the Sun. The Moon continues to wax and bulge showing the 'face of the holy cow' called gibbous moon in astronomy. Aṣṭamī is a transition when the horns of the holy cow become invisible and its face starts showing. This tithi aṣṭamī, which is 6° on either side of the right angle position of the Moon from the Sun, is a transformation tithi and shows evolution from the

[2] Wikipedia http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lunar_phase

early stages where the being seeks protection to adulthood where it seeks fulfillment of its purpose. Visible face of the Moon symbolizes recognition of individuality and independent identity as well as purpose definition.

Figure 3: Tithi & Pakṣa



The gibbous Moon keeps growing till it becomes full and round 'moon-faced' lady on the full Moon. This complete visibility of the face of the Moon symbolizes the stage of achievement of objective, realization of the purpose or simply blooming at full glory. This last 15th tithi when the Moon waxes from 165° to 180° angular separation from Sun, is not referred to by a number like the others - Pratipada (1) to caturdasī (14). Instead of being called by its number as pañcadaśī (15), it gets a special name 'pūrṇimā' meaning complete, achieved or blooming. After pūrṇimā, the Moon begins to wane and starts losing its luster. It transforms to another gibbous moon, which is again the face of the holy cow, but with a difference. Earlier in the waxing phase the face of the holy cow was turned to the right (in the northern hemisphere[3]) and the left side was dark but in the waning phase the face of the holy cow is turned to the left side (in the northern hemisphere). This flipping of the face of the holy cow at the change of phase is a sudden transformation occurring at the exact point of the full moon at 180° from Sun and the moment is called gaṇḍānta – implying a dangerous junction in time or life. It is specifically called pūrṇimā gaṇḍānta starting 2 ghāṭikā (48 minutes) before the exact moment of full moon and continuing to 2 ghāṭikā after the pūrṇimā into the kṛṣṇa pratipada tithi. Śrī Satya Nārāyaṇa is worshipped at this gaṇḍānta to help tide over the transformations that bring about destruction. It is said that one who shall see a thousand full moons and remember[4] Śrī Satya Nārāyaṇa shall tide over death symbolized by the changing phase of the moon and shall not return to mṛtyu loka (plane of death – earthly existence).

[3] In the southern hemisphere

[4] Bhaviśya Purāṇa, Śrī Kṛṣṇa teaches the mantra – om namo bhagavate satyadevāya

Thereafter the face of the holy cow begins to grow smaller as the gibbous moon progresses to the third-quarter moon called kṛṣṇa aṣṭamī (K8 tithi). This tithi is also a junction and at this point the face transforms to horns of the crescent moon which continues to be visible but becomes sharper and thinner as the moon wanes till kṛṣṇa caturdasī (K14 tithi) and the moon starts to vanish. This is called narka caturdasī as it symbolizes death after decay and the moment of going to hell for all the sins. The purāṇa emphasize the need to worship Lord Śiva with the pañcākṣarī[5] mantra to burn the sins that cause such a movement to hellish worlds. The moon vanishes in kṛṣṇa pañcadaśī (K15) and this is called amā (amāvāsya) as Soma hides in the plants and trees.

Remember: (1) In the northern hemisphere, if the left side of the Moon is dark then it is śukla pakṣa while if the right side of the Moon is dark then it is kṛṣṇa pakṣa. Reverse for southern hemisphere. (2) If neither side is dark and it is very circular then it is a full moon, else if there is no moon in the sky that night, then it is amāvāsya or śukla pratipada. (3) If you can see a crescent then it is a weak moon seeking protection by showing its horns while if the face shows (bulging moon) then it is happy and strong.

[5] नमः शिवाय (namaḥ śivāya) is the pañcākṣarī mantra taught by Adi Śaṅkara and the praṇava is added by the initiated as ॐ नमः शिवाय (om namaḥ śivāya)

3 Tithi svāmi jñāna

Śloka

क्रमात्तिथीनां पतयोऽग्निधातृगौरीगणेशोऽहि गुहो रविश्च।
महेशदुर्गान्तकविश्वविष्णुकामेशसोमाः पितरो हि दर्शे॥

kramāttithīnāṁ patayo'gnidhātṛgaurīgaṇeśo'hi guho raviśca |
maheśadurgāntakaviśrvaviṣṇukāmeśasomāḥ pitaro hi darśe ||

Translation: In the order of the tithi [reckoned from pratipada (1)], their lords are Agni, Dhātṛ, Gourī, Gaṇeśa, Ahi, Guha, Ravi, Maheśa, Durgā, Antaka, Viśva, Viṣṇu, Kāma, Īṣa and Chandra while amāvāsya is lorded by Pitṛs.

The śloka describes the deities lording the sixteen types of tithi which are the fourteen numbered tithi - pratipada (1) to caturdasī (14), and the two complete or empty (śūnya) tithi - pūrṇimā and amāvāsya.

3.1 Combustion (astāṅgata)

The moon suffers combustion (astāṅgata) when within 12° of the Sun and this includes both the amāvāsya and śukla pratipada tithi. Astāṅgata is derived from ‘asta’ means set, defeated, vanished, fallen and generally combusted, and ‘aṅga’ means body, limb implying a proximity orb for each planet when conjunct the Sun leads to a destruction of their body/limb. Astāṅgata can mean destruction of boy limbs and such suffering due to close proximity to the Sun. There are stages for astāṅgata – (1) when the planet moves towards the Sun and comes within the combustion range, (2) when it is conjunct the Sun and (3) when it starts moving out of combustion and finally recovers. Going into combustion is like amāvāsya, exact conjunction is the point of the new moon showing a new creation or new life, major transformations and coming out of combustion is like getting a new life with renewed energy. Varāhamihira states that when Jupiter comes out of combustion on the 13th day after its conjunction with the Sun, it shines with great (spiritual) glory. This can be extended to all planets[6] including the Moon. However, combustion in retrogression is completely different and indicates the destruction of demoniacal tendencies brought about the rajas guṇa planets

[6] We use the forced definition of the word planets to mean the navagraha i.e. all the six planets from Sun to Saturn, plus the Moon and its nodes Rāhu and Ketu.

Venus and Mercury as well as the tamas guṇa lunar nodes Rāhu and Ketu. These four suffer combustions in the Sun when in retrograde motion. Its effects will depend on a host of other factors in a horoscope chart.

3.2 Janma Tithi doṣa (flaw)

Amāvāsya refers to terrible suffering of poverty and destruction brought about by the manes due to disrespect of traditions. Birth during amāvāsya is considered a major flaw called amāvāsya doṣa. The state of the moon at the time of birth indicates the fate that one is destined to live and face. It shows the hand of destiny.

The moon god Chandra abducted Tārā, the wife of Devaguru Bṛhaspati on kṛṣṇa pakṣa caturdasī and therefore suffers the curse of the preceptor. Birth on kṛṣṇa caturdasī tithi brings another major flaw called kṛṣṇa caturdasī doṣa. Since caturdasī is ruled by Īṣa (Iśāna form of Lord Śiva), it shows that the birth has occurred due to disrespect to teachers and preceptors or causing serious trouble for them as Śiva is the parameṣṭhi guru. Parāśara teaches an elaborate worship of Lord Śiva to overcome the flaw else, at some point of time in life, the native is bound to steal from the preceptor and shall consequentially suffer.

On amāvāsya Chandra hid in the plants and did the terrible misdeed, the defilement of Tārā, which led to the birth of Budha (Mercury). This tithi indicates women whose honor can be defiled. The śloka gives the devatā as Pitṛs – meaning the forefathers of the lineage or family. Worshipping the pitṛs, family deity (kula devatā) and sages near holy trees brings the suffering to an end and restores the purity. Varāhamihira explains[7] that a woman can never be defiled as after her menstruation she shall be cleansed.

The classics list good results for some tithi while some of them, particularly kṛṣṇa caturdasī and amāvāsya are stated to have serious flaws. Study the results of birth in different tithi as given in classical jyotiṣa literature. We give a list of the devatā and some synonyms to study.

3.3 Tithī Pati and Devatā

There are two lists for the devatā. The first is the तिथी पति (tithī pati - lord of tithī) while the second is tithī deva (enlightener, remover of evils). These are to be understood as the ādi and pratyādi devatā of the graha. The first gives the benediction and the second removes the evils and hindrances. They are like two energies – one creating and driving and the other

[7] Bṛhat Saṁhitā, Varāhamihira

overseeing, removing obstacles in path, guiding, enlightening. The first is the form of the deity and the second is a vehicle or energy who carries that deity. It is understood that without this carrier energy, the tithī pati cannot arrive, and to that extent, this devatā must be worshipped.

Table 1: Tithi Devatā

Tithi	No.	Devatā (Lord)	Other Names	Devatā List 2	Prada (Giving)	
Pratipada	1	Agni	Jātavedas	Brahma	Vriddhi	Increased prosperity
Dvitīya	2	Dhātṛ	Prajāpati, Savitṛ	Vidhātṛ	Maṅgala	Auspicious, marriage
Tritīya	3	Gourī	Pārvatī, Kālī, Aṁbā	Hari	Bala	Strength
Caturthī	4	Gaṇeśa	Vighneśvara	Yama	Khala	Evil, Cursed
Pañcamī	5	Ahi	Nāga, Ananta	Chandra	Lakṣmī	Prosperity, Wealth
Ṣaṣṭhī	6	Guha	Kārtikeya	Kārtikeya	Yaśa	Fame
Saptamī	7	Ravi	Sūrya	Indra	Mitra	Friend, Benefactor
Aṣṭamī	8	Maheśa	Maheśvara, Rudra	Vasu	Dvandva	Enmity, Conflict
Navamī	9	Durgā	Caṇḍī, Cāmuṇḍā	Sarpa	Ugra	Aggressive
Daśamī	10	Antaka	Yama	Dharma	Saumya	Soft
Ekādaśī	11	Viśva	Viśvakarma, Viśvarupa	Rudra	Ananda	Joy, Happy
Dvādaśī	12	Viṣṇu	Nārāyaṇa	Āditya	Yaśa	Fame
Trayodaśī	13	Kāma	Anaṅga, Kandarpa	Kāma	Jaya	Victorious
Caturdasī	14	Īṣa	Iśāna, Śiva	Kālī	Urga	Aggressive
Pūrṇimā	15P	Chandra	Soma	Viśvadeva	Saumya	Soft
Amāvāsya	15A	Pitṛs	Saptarṣi	Pitṛs	Asubha	Inauspicious, Evil

For example, in the naming of a child on the 12th day (nāma karaṇa), if the child was born on pratipada, the tithī and its devatā should be worshipped first followed by the nakṣatra and nakṣatra devatā. Typically the mantra would be ॐ प्रतिपदे स्वाहा (om pratipade svāhā) ॐ ब्रह्मणे स्वाहा (om brahmaṇe svāhā).

3.4 Śrī Agni Deva

Pratipada (1) has Agni as tithī pati meaning that the form of the deity to be worshipped is Agni deva and his vāhana (carrier) is the ram. Agni (अग्नि) has many meanings which are all well worth exploring. The word represents energy and brings light as the single greatest source that allowed human beings to rule over earth. Although fire is the first translation offered in books, the correct meaning should be understood as light that gives life and form. He is the guru of the Brāhmaṇa being reverentially called jātavedas - he who gives birth to knowledge. He has Śiva as the deity of

glorification and is the adhi devatā of Sun. Generally worshipped in households with the navākṣarī (nine syllable) mantra ॐ हुं रं चैतन्यायै नमः [om huṁ raṁ caitanyāyai namaḥ], Agni is also worshipped with many hymns of the Ṛk Veda. He is the ruler of planet earth and those blessed by Agni will always be healthy, knowledgeable and wealthy enjoying the best this world has to offer.

Agni manifests in three forms – (1) Āvāhanīyāgni who is the energy of the Sun providing light and life to all on earth and is invoked for all spiritual purposes; (2) Dakṣiṇāgni who is the destroyer of everything and is a manifestation of the south facing Śrī Rudra; (3) Gārhāpatyāgni who is the fire of the kitchen of the householder and is the blessing of food. These three forms are considered three sons of Agni deva borne by first wife Svāhā. The seven Pitṛs[8] are to be worshipped with the name of the second most auspicious wife of Agni called Svadhā. The Devī Bhagavataṁ gives the mantras' for worshipping these śaktī of Agni deva so that life can be lived to its full and all karma becomes fruitful.

Svāhā Devī	Deva	Sun	ॐ ह्रीं श्रीं वह्निजायायै देव्यै स्वाहा om hrīṁ śrīṁ vahnijāyāyai devyai svāhā
Svadhā Devī	Pitṛs	Moon	ॐ ह्रीं श्रीं क्लीं स्वधा देव्यै स्वाहा om hrīṁ śrīṁ klīṁ svadhā devyai svāhā

Agni attains great importance as he is the lord of bhū Loka (earth plane) while Sūrya and Indra lord over bhuva and svarga loka respectively. The seven tongues of Agni are worshipped with mantras[9] and show the residence of Agni during the weekdays. By merely reciting these mantras energy in the system improves, digestion and appetite are better, sight has more focus and brain becomes very sharp.

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[8] The seven pitṛs are Kavyāvaha, Anala, Soma, Yama, Aryamā, Agniṣvāttā and Barhiṣat. Worshipping the Pitṛs on amāvāsya removes the blemish of amāvāsya doṣa and redeems sins due to covetousness, greed and many other failings of the human nature.

[9] ॐ श्रुं त्रिशिखायै बहुरुपायै स्वाहा। दक्षिणे मध्ये उत्तरे च om śruṁ triśikhāyai bahurupāyai svāhā | (dakṣiṇe madhye uttare ca)

ॐ स्त्रुं हिरण्यायै स्वाहा। एशान्यै om struṁ hiraṇyāyai svāhā | (eeśānyai)

ॐ ब्रुं कनकायै स्वाहा। पुर्वस्याम् om bruṁ kanakāyai svāhā| (purvasyām)

ॐ हुं रक्तायै स्वाहा। आग्नेयाम् om hruṁ raktāyai svāhā| (āgneyām)

ॐ प्रुं कृष्णायै स्वाहा। नैरृत्याम् om pruṁ kṛṣṇāyai svāhā | (nairṛtyām)

ॐ ध्रुं सुप्रभायै स्वाहा। पश्चिमायाम् om ḍhruṁ suprabhāyai svāhā| (paścimāyām)

ॐ द्रुं मरुज्जिह्वायै स्वाहा। वायव्ये om druṁ marujjihvāyai svāhā| (vāyavye)

3.5 Dhātṛ Dvitīya

The form of Brahma having the head of a goat (or ram) is called Dakṣa Prajāpati who is considered the perfect son of Brahma who carried out the wishes of his father to populate the world. He is the performer of yajña and various other sacrifices for the benefit of the world. Brahma is generally appeased with the mantra ॐ ब्रह्मणे नमः (om brahmaṇe namaḥ) while specific mantras for the saptarṣi[10] as the progenitors of lineages are like ॐ अत्रिब्रह्मणे नमः (om atribrahmaṇe namaḥ) for Brahmarṣi Atri of the lunar lineage.

Children are the fruits (lābha-gains) of marriage and they show the gains. In jyotiṣa, Venus is examined for the ability to have children and their well being. Venus lords over the water element and its highest power is in the control of virility (semen), sexuality and marriage. Dhātṛ (Dhātā, Āditya) is the creator of the animate world and as Vidhātṛ (Vidhātā) he provides all the material needs. The act of creation refers to him as Savitur[11] with śaktī Sāvitrī produces everything and he is the creator god not only creating everything but also meeting all the needs. The highest mantra of the Hindu is addressed to him and is generally referred to as the gāyatrī mantra.

तत् सवितुर्वरेण्यं भर्गो देवस्य धीमहि। धियो यो नः प्रचोदयात्॥ ३।६२।१०

tat savitur vareṇyaṁ bhargo devasya dhīmahi, dhiyo yo naḥ pracodayāt. 3.62.10

3.6 Maṅgala Gourī Tritīya

Tritīya (3) has Gourī as its tithī pati and Hari (Viṣṇu) as the tithī deva. Hari also means lion in Sanskrit and shows the vāhana (carrier) of Gourī. The nature of the tithī is known from the vāhana of the tithī and the lion is the strongest animal. The tithī bestows strength and shows good grooming. Activities like hair-cut, shaving, nail trimming and going for beauty and health are favored. This is a mark of royalty as the lion (Hari) becomes the carrier of royal power and authority.

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[10] Seven seers associated with the seven planets, seven tongues of agni and as the creator sages. The original are Marīci, Atri, Aṅgirās, Vasiṣṭha, Pulastya, Pulaha and Kratu. In the current era Marīci is replaced by his illustrious son Kaśyapa.

[11] Savitur – prasava kāraṇa devatā (cause of birth)

3.7 Gaṇeśa Caturthī

Caturthī (Tithī 4) has Gaṇeśa as its tithī pati and must be worshipped to overcome dangers and obstacles, particularly to learning. Yama transformed into a mouse and carries Gaṇeśa around. As such because Yama the god of death is the carrier of the tithī, the day is favorable for destruction of enemies, particularly the six sins called ṣaḍripu and acts of battle. There are many mantras for Gaṇeśa, some of them are given below. Students should choose one to practice every day before they start reading.

1. Bīja Mantra

गं गणेशाय नमः

gaṁ gaṇeśāya namaḥ

2. Based on Dattātreya Upaniṣad, the bīja is extended to the longer 'ā' for fruits in this world.

ॐ गां गणेशाय नमः

om gāṁ gaṇeśāya namaḥ

3. Śaktī Gaṇeśa mantra, also called Durgā-Gaṇeśa mantra has the hrīṁ (śaktī praṇava) enclosing baby Gaṇeśa 'gaṁ'

ॐ ह्रीं गं ह्रीं महागणेशाय नमः स्वाहा

om hrīṁ gaṁ hrīṁ mahāgaṇeśāya namaḥ svāhā

4. Caturthī doṣa mantra or Rādhikā pujita Gaṇeśa mantra that removes all blemish associated with the caturthī tithi

ॐ ग्लौं गं गणपतये विघ्न विनाशिने स्वाहा

om glauṁ gaṁ gaṇapataye vighna vināśine svāhā

Generally Yama is worshipped as the god of death and yet it is rare to find the mantra for Yama, as the mouse of Gaṇeśa. This mantra is given with the Ucchiṣṭa Gaṇeśa mantra.

ॐ मं मूषिकाय गणाधिपवाहनाय धर्मराजाय स्वाहा

om maṁ mūṣikāya gaṇādhipavāhanāya dharmarājāya svāhā

Complete the list of deities for the other Lords and Devatā of the tithī.

3.8 Assignment

1. Explain the horns and face of holy cow with respect to the phases of Moon in the Southern hemisphere.
2. Determine your birth tithi (show the calculations) and determine the lord of your birth tithi.
3. Write an essay explaining (a) the name of the devatā of your janma tithi (2) other names of the devatā and (3) the effect of the tithi on your life
4. Write a paragraph (3-4 lines) on each of the sixteen lords of the tithi